

Miscellaneous.

Oliver Cromwell.

Born 1599, died 1658.

BY NATHANIEL HAWTHORNE.

Not long after King James the First took the place of Queen Elizabeth on the throne of England, there lived an English knight at a place called Hinchbrook. His name was Sir Oliver Cromwell. He spent his life, I suppose, pretty much like other English knights and squires in those days, hunting hares and foxes, and drinking large quantities of ale and wine. The old house in which he dwelt had been occupied by his ancestors before him, for a good many years. In it there was a great hall, hung round with coats of arms, and helmets, cuirasses and swords, which his forefathers had used in battle, and with horns of deer and tails of foxes, which they or Sir Oliver himself had killed in the chase.

This Sir Oliver Cromwell had a nephew, who had been called Oliver, after himself, but who was generally known in the family by the name of Little Noll. His father was a younger brother of Sir Oliver. The child was often sent to visit his uncle, who probably found him a troublesome little fellow to take care of. He was forever in mischief, and always running into some danger or other, from which he seemed to escape only by miracle.

Even while he was an infant in the cradle, a strange accident had befallen him. A huge ape, which was kept in the family, snatched up Little Noll in his fore-paws and clambered up him to the roof of the house. There this ugly beast sat grinning at the delighted spectators, as if he had done the most praiseworthy thing imaginable. Fortunately, however, he brought the child safe down again; and the event was afterwards considered an omen that Noll would reach a very elevated station in the world.

One morning, when Noll was five or six years old, a royal messenger arrived at Hinchbrook, with tidings that King James was coming to dine with Sir Oliver Cromwell. This was a high honor to be sure, but a very great trouble for all the lords and ladies, knights, squires, guards and yeomen, who waited on the king, were to be dressed as well as himself, and more provisions would be eaten, and more wine drunk in that one day, than generally in a month. However, Sir Oliver expressed much thankfulness for the king's intended visit, and ordered his butler and cook to make the best preparations in their power. So a great fire was kindled in the kitchen; and the neighbors, knowing that boiling, baking, stewing, roasting and frying, were going on merrily, and by the sound of trumpets was heard, approached nearer and nearer; and a heavy, old-fashioned coach, surrounded by guards on horseback, drove up to the house. Sir Oliver, with his hat in his hand, stood at the gate ready to receive the king. His majesty was dressed in a suit of green, not very new; he had a feather in his hat, and a triple ruff round his neck; and over his shoulder was slung a hunting horn, instead of a sword. Altogether, he had not the most dignified aspect in the world; but the spectators gazed at him, as if there was something supernatural and divine in his person. They even shaded their eyes with their hands, as if they were dazzled by the glory of his countenance.

"How are ye, man?" cried King James, speaking in a Scotch accent; for Scotland was his native country. "By my crown, Sir Oliver, but I am glad to see ye!" The good knight thanked the king, at the same time kneeling down, while his majesty alighted. When King James stood on the ground, he directed Sir Oliver's attention to a little boy who had come with him in the coach. "He was six or seven years old, and wore a hat and feather, and was more richly dressed than the king himself. Though by no means an ill-looking child, he seemed shy, or even sulky; and his cheeks were rather pale, as if he had been kept moping within doors, instead of being sent out to play in the sun and wind."

"I have brought my son Charlie to see ye," said the king. "I hope, Sir Oliver, ye have a son of your own, to be his playmate?" Sir Oliver Cromwell made a reverential bow to the little prince, whom one of the attendants had now taken out of the coach. It was wonderful to see how all the spectators, even the aged men, with their gray beards, humbled themselves before this child. They bent their bodies till their heads almost swept the dust. They looked as if they were ready to kneel down and worship him.

The poor little prince! From his earliest infancy, not a soul had dared to contradict him; everybody around him had acted as if he were a superior being; so that, of course, he had imbibed the same opinion of himself. He naturally supposed that the whole Kingdom of Great Britain, and all its inhabitants, had been created solely for his amusement. This was a sad mistake; and it cost him dear enough after he had succeeded his father's throne.

"What a noble little prince he is!" exclaimed Sir Oliver, lifting his hands in admiration. "No, please your majesty, I have no son to be the playmate of his Royal Highness; but there is a nephew of mine somewhere about the house. He is near the prince's age, and will be but too happy to wait upon his Royal Highness."

"Send for him, man! send for him!" said the king.

But, as it happened, there was no need of sending for master Noll. While King James was speaking, a rugged, bold-faced, sturdy little fellow thrust himself through the throng of courtiers and attendants, and greeted the prince with a broad smile. His doublet and hose (which had been put on new and clean in honor of the king's visit) were already soiled and torn with the rough play in which he had spent the morning. He looked no more abashed than if King James was his uncle, and the prince one of his customary playfellows.

This was little Noll himself. "Here, please your majesty, my nephew," said Sir Oliver, somewhat ashamed of Noll's appearance and demeanor.

"Oliver, make your obeisance to the king's Majesty."

The boy made a pretty respectful obeisance to the king; for, in those days, children were taught to pay reverence to their elders. King James, who preceded himself greatly on his scholarship, asked Noll a few questions in the Latin grammar, and then introduced him

to his son. The little prince in a very grave and dignified manner extended his hand, not for Noll to shake, but that he might kneel down and kiss it.

"Nephew," said Sir Oliver, "pay your duty to the prince."

"I owe him no duty," cried Noll, thrusting aside the prince's hand, with a rude laugh. "Why should I kiss that boy's hand?"

All the courtiers were amazed and confounded, and Sir Oliver the most of all. But the king laughed heartily, saying that little Noll had a stubborn English spirit, and that it was well for his son to learn sometimes what sort of a people he was to rule over.

So King James and his train entered the house; and the prince, with Noll and some other children, was sent to play in a separate room while his Majesty was at dinner. The young people soon became acquainted; for boys, brothers the sons of monarchs or of peasants, all like play, and are pleased with one another's society. What games they diverted themselves with, I cannot tell. Perhaps they played at ball—perhaps at blind-man's bluff—perhaps at prison-bars. Such games have been in use for hundreds of years; and princes as well as poor children have spent some of their happiest hours in playing at them.

Meanwhile, King James and his nobles were feasting with Sir Oliver, in the great hall. The king sat in a gilded chair, under a canopy, at the head of a long table. Whenever any of the company addressed him, it was with the deepest reverence. If the attendants offered him wine, or the various delicacies of the festival, it was upon their bended knees. You would have thought, by these tokens of worship, that the monarch was a supernatural being; only he seemed to have quite as much need of those vulgar matters, food and drink, as any other person at the table. But fate had ordained that good King James should not finish his dinner in peace.

All of a sudden, there arose a terrible uproar in the room where the children were at play. Angry shouts and shrill cries of alarm were mixed up together; while the voices of older persons were likewise heard, trying to restore order among the children. The king and everybody else at the table, looked aghast; for perhaps the tumult made them think that a general rebellion had broken out.

"Merry on us!" muttered Sir Oliver; "that graceless nephew of mine is in some mischief or other. That naughty little wretch!" Getting up from table, he ran to see what was the matter, followed by many of the guests, and the king among them. They all crowded to the door of the play-room.

On looking in, they beheld the little prince Charles, with his rich dress all torn, and covered with the dust of the floor. His royal blood was streaming from his nose in great abundance. He gazed at Noll with a mixture of rage and fright, and at the same time a pained expression, as if he could not understand how any mortal boy should dare to give him a beating. As for Noll, there stood his sturdy little figure, bold as a lion, looking as if he were ready to fight not only the prince, but the king and kingdom too.

"You little villain!" cried his uncle,—"What have you been about? Down on your knees, and ask the prince's pardon. How dare you lay your hands on the king's majesty's royal son?"

"He struck me first," grumbled the valiant little Noll; "and I've only given him his due." Sir Oliver and the guests lifted up their hands in astonishment and horror. No punishment seemed severe enough for this wicked little varlet, who had dared to resent a blow from the king's own son. Some of the courtiers were of opinion that Noll should be sent prisoner to the Tower of London, and brought to trial for high treason. Others, in their great zeal for the king's service, were about to lay hands on the boy, and chastise him in the royal presence.

But King James, who sometimes showed a good deal of sagacity, ordered them to desist. "Thou art a bold boy," said he, looking fixedly at little Noll; "and if thou live to be a man, my son Charlie would do wisely to be friends with thee."

"I never will!" cried the little prince, stamping his foot.

"Peace, Charlie, peace!" said the king; then addressing Sir Oliver and the attendants, "Harm not the nephew; for he has taught my son a good lesson, if Heaven do him grace. Let me attempt to tyrannize over the stubborn race of Englishmen, let him remember little Noll Cromwell, and his own bloody nose!"

So the king finished his dinner and departed; and, for many a long year, the children quarrel between Prince Charles and Noll Cromwell was forgotten. The prince, indeed, might have met a more peaceful death, had he remembered that quarrel, and the moral which his father drew from it. But when old King James was dead, and Charles sat upon his throne, he seemed to forget that he was but a man, and that his meanest subjects were men as well as he. He wished to have the property and lives of the people of England entirely at his own disposal. But the Puritans, and all who loved liberty, rose against him, and beat him in many battles, and pulled him down from his throne.

Throughout this war between the king and nobles on one side, and the people of England on the other, there was a famous leader, who did more towards the ruin of royal authority than all the rest. The contest seemed like a wrestling-match between King Charles and this strong man. And the king was overthrown.

When the disrowned monarch was brought to trial, that warlike leader sat in the judgment-hall. Many judges were present, besides himself; but he alone had the power to save King Charles, or to doom him to the scaffold. After sentence was pronounced, this victorious general was entreated by his own children, on their knees, to rescue his majesty from death.

"No!" said he sternly. "Better that one man should perish, than that the whole country should be ruined for his sake. It is resolved that he shall die!"

When Charles, no longer a king, was led to the scaffold, his great enemy stood at a window of the royal palace of Whitehall. He beheld the poor victim of pride and evil education, and misused power, as he fell his head upon the block. He looked on with a steady gaze, while a black-veiled executioner lifted the fatal axe, and smote off that mounted head at a single blow.

"It is a righteous deed," perhaps he said to himself. "Now Englishmen may enjoy their rights."

At night, when the body of Charles was laid in the coffin, in a gloomy chamber, the

general entered, lighting himself with a torch. Its gleam showed that he was now growing old; his visage was scarred with the many battles in which he had led the van; his brow was wrinkled with care, and with the continual exercise of stern authority. Probably there was not a single trait, either of aspect or manner, that belonged to the little Noll, who had battled so stoutly with Prince Charles. Yet this was he.

He lifted the coffin-lid, and caused the light of his torch to fall upon the dead monarch's face. Then, probably, his mind went back over all the marvellous events that he had brought the hereditary king of England to this dishonored coffin, and had raised himself, an humble individual, to the possession of kingly power. He was a king, though without the empty title or the glittering crown.

"Why was it," said Cromwell to himself,—"might have been—as he gazed at the pale features in the coffin—"Why was it, that this great king fell, and that poor Noll Cromwell has gained all the power of the realm?"

And, indeed, why was it? King Charles had fallen, because, in his manhood, the same as when a child, he disdained to feel that every human creature was his brother. He deemed himself a superior being, and fancied that his subjects were created only for a king to rule over. And Cromwell rose, because, in spite of his many faults, he really fought for the rights and freedom of his fellow-men; and therefore the poor and the oppressed all lent their strength to him.

From the Spirit of the Age.

The Ideal is the Real.

"God never yet permitted us to frame a theory too beautiful for his power to make practicable."

Men take the pure ideals of their souls

And look them fast away.

And never dream that things so beautiful

Are fit for every day!

So counteracts pass current in their lives,

And stones they give for bread,

And starvings, and fearings, they walk

Through life along the dead,

Though never yet was pure Ideal

Too false for them to make their Real!

The thoughts of glory dawning on the soul

Are glorious Heaven-glows,

And God's eternal truth lies folded deep

In all man's lofty dreams:

In thought's still world, some brother-to which

bound

The plane, Kepler saw;

And through long years, he searched the

spheres, and there

He found the answering law.

Men said he sought a wild Ideal;

The stars made answer,—"It is Real!"

Aye, Daniel, Howard, all the crowned ones

That, star-like, gleam through time,

Lived boldly out before the clear-eyed sun,

Their inmost thoughts sublime!

These truths, to them more beautiful than day,

They knew would quicken men;

And deeds befitting the millennial trust

They dared to practice then;

Till they who mocked their young Ideal,

In meekness owned it was the Real.

Thine early dreams, which came like "shapes

of light,"

Came bearing prophecy;

And Nature's tongue, from leaves to quiring

stars,

Teach loving faith to thee.

Fear not to build thine aisle in the heights

Where golden splendors lay,

And trust thyself unto thine inmost soul,

In simple faith alway,

And God will make divinely Real

The highest form of thine Ideal.

Uncle Tom's Cabin.

Unlike our brother editor's, we have never undertaken to criticize or commend this master-work of Mrs. Stowe. The following from the Pennsylvania, is one of the choicest commendations we have seen. This compliment will be best appreciated after reading the following notice which this "Pennsylvanian" keeps posted up in small caps at the head of its editorial columns. "The Pennsylvania having a large circulation in the South and South-western Cities and States, is the best advertising medium in Philadelphia."

From the Pennsylvania.

Such is the title of a work in two volumes, which has recently appeared from the pen of Mrs. Harriet Beecher Stowe. It has already had a large circulation, upwards of ten thousand copies having been printed and sold. It is because of the apparent popularity which this rapid sale shows, and the dangerous and untidy tendency which the work must have, that it is intended briefly to expose its character.

A tale of fiction, its object is stated to be: "To awaken sympathy and feeling for the African race, as they exist among us; to show their wrongs and sorrows, under a system so necessarily unjust as to defeat and do away the good effects of all that can be attempted for them, by their best friends, under it."

That the "sketches," as they are called, which make up the tale are drawn with a pen of great power, is evident; and from this very power of the writer, and the "thrilling interest," which attends the development of the story, the influence of the book for evil is increased. Nor is the truthfulness of the "sketches" meant to be impeached; they may be, and doubtless are, all true; but they do not alter the case.

Four slaves are taken as the principal characters of that class, to exemplify the evils of the parting of husband and wife, and of parent and child—the subjecting female beauty to the power of lustful and heartless men—and the placing of human beings under the absolute control of brutal and unfeeling fellow-mortals. Three several and distinct failures—one of a cruel, tyrannical and hard-hearted disposition; the other two kind and indulgent, and a slave-dealer, are the principal white personages. Around these characters is woven a tale, embracing the most horrible and deeply to be regretted features, which have ever been conceived as attendant on slavery; with some

few of a milder cast, showing the mitigating circumstances, which so often render the yoke light and easy. The whole is worked up into a narrative of "thrilling interest," abounding in scenes drawn with a simplicity and power which it is to be regretted had not been employed in some better undertaking.

Now, a fiction of this kind must be written with a design to accomplish some real or fancied good. What is the design of the book in question? "Since the Legislative Act of 1850," says the author, "when she heard, with perfect surprise and consternation, Christian and humane people actually recommending the remanding of escaped fugitives into slavery, as a duty binding on good citizens; when she heard on all hands, from kind, compassionate, and estimable people, in the free States of the North, deliberations and discussions as to what Christian duty could be on this head, she could only think these men and Christians cannot know what slavery is; if they did, such a question could never be open for discussion. And from this arose a desire to exhibit in a living dramatic reality." And this is the end proposed to be accomplished by this fiction!

That is, at a time when this blessed Union, after being exposed to perils greater than yet beset it, from the wild and seductive schemes of men with but one idea, had, through the unwarmed and strenuous efforts of the wise and patriotic in the national councils, been rescued from danger; and when the fierce turmoil of the struggle was settling into repose, to fan into fresh fury the unextinguishable zeal of fanatics, and to excite anew the suspicious fears and prejudices of our Southern brethren. For clock it with words as you may, this is the design; and no other will it accomplish. Would that it might utterly and forever fail! The "Christian and humane, kind, compassionate and estimable public" of the North, have not counselled and acted with their eyes shut. They know full well the facts and the necessary and deplorable attendants of slavery; nor will "Uncle Tom's Cabin" enlighten them.

But there are two classes in the United States upon which this work will have a most unhappy effect. First, it will make the fanatics of the North more fanatical—more self-opinionated—more obstinate—more determined in opposition to the laws of the land—and more fierce in their hatred towards slaveholders. Second, it will serve to excite the South—to inspire them with jealousy—to excite their suspicions, and to fill them with distrust of the North. It will increase the bitterness of feeling on both sides. It will not and cannot whitewash in any manner the condition of the slave, or in advancing the work of emancipation. No opportunity is lost throughout the book to sneer at and vilify the law of the land. The scenes at Christiana are openly justified and defended, in the drawing of a picture, whose main features are evidently taken from that bloody tragedy. Were the patience and endurance of Uncle Tom, under the tortures inflicted by a cruel and vindictive master, held up as a bright example of the power of Christianity to support and strengthen in the severest trials, it would have been well enough. But in this as in other scenes of the most pathetic and heart-rending character, the whole tone of the narrative is calculated and meant to inspire hatred of the slaveholder; and to work the mind of the reader up to such a pitch, that he would be ready to do anything in the history of this country, which slavery—slavery; to shut out every other consideration from his view, and to awaken in him a contempt and disregard of the law.

And more than this, it is a book which will be seized on with avidity in England, and will be reprinted there, and meet with a ready and rapid sale. But will it awaken or strengthen one feeling of sympathy or brotherhood? No! It will serve rather to strengthen these bitter feelings of Pharisaical pride and self-complacency which now so unfortunately possess the English mind. It will be regarded as a true picture of the state of the whole country from Maine to Texas. The ameliorations which the narrative depicts will be overlooked, and Englishmen will gloat with all the satisfaction of a blind and fanatical zeal over the scenes of horror, and thank God with hypocritical humility, that they are not as their American brethren.

It is always to be regretted when fiction is perverted into an instrument of evil, instead of being used as a channel through which to inculcate good. But how fearful a responsibility rests upon the author who uses, or rather abuses, her talents, in the production of a work, whose effect must be to nourish the seeds of discord and division in our land, and to pamper the appetites of avarice and impudent falsehood, who seize with avidity upon every thing which feeds their own unbounded self-conceit, and furnishes an occasion for heaping contempt and opprobrium upon this country.

P. C. S.

CURIOSITY.—A letter to Hon. Truman Smith, from the Lake Superior mines, says: "We have put in the box a piece of wood, or of a skull that was twenty feet long, when found, lying twenty feet under the surface of the earth, and a mass of copper resting thereon, mined out of the vein, weighing 5 tons and 1,542 pounds. Every particle of the rock was hammered off from it, and immediately about the mass were found two copper tools that showed copper to have been worked made from stone, were lying around it, and also, coal ashes, to all appearances, as fresh as though they had been made last year. Vegetable and the depth of four or six feet overlaid the whole, on which and immediately over this mass of copper was standing a tree, which proved, on being cut down, to be over five hundred years old."

GRACE.—The Dedham Gazette thus briefly and graphically portrays the characters of the leading Presidential aspirants:

Of the Democratic expectants, Douglas is himself a negro-driver and owner: Cass has been eating proslavery diet, and his own words, for a long period; and Buchanan is covered with algeet mud, from his head to his heels.

Of the Whig candidates, Fillmore breathes only through the Black and bloody nostrils of Slavery: Webster is the groom of the stables to the peculiar institution; and Scott, alarmed lest he should be left behind, is hunting over his past life to find if there is not one rotten spot, through which he may fall to the depth of his heels.

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